

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
A NEW NEWS LETTER - NUMBER TWO

MARCH 15, 1988

THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

It is almost EASTER again, and sensitive people everywhere will awaken on that morn to a new hope. Even those who have neglected their faith or have forgotten the rudiments of their faith or whether they have professed a faith or not will pause on EASTER and know that something great happened to the world when someone discovered an empty tomb. The greatest story ever told will be told again and again in churches all over the world, as it must if the world is to be saved. The words of the Messenger of God on that first EASTER still move us, and mystify us, and send us forth to tell others: "Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead..." (Jn. 28:5-7). HAPPY EASTER TO ALL! TELL EVERYONE!

OFFICIAL CALL TO THE TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE

The churches of the Southeast Conference are hereby notified of the Twenty-Second Annual meeting of the Conference to take place on the campus of the University Of The South, Sewanee, Tennessee, June 10-12, 1988. This will be one of the most important and exciting meetings the people have ever experienced. The theme for the gathering is: "ON HOLY GROUND." The delegates will vote on a call to a new Conference Minister, vote on changes in the Conference Constitution, vote on a Conference Budget, vote on Officers, and do a lot of other things, and have a lot of fun and serious worship in all of it. YOU ATTENTION IS CALLED TO THE REGISTRATION FORM FOR DELEGATES INCLUDED IN THIS MAILING. PLEASE, PLEASE, GET THESE FORMS BACK TO THE CONFERENCE OFFICE RIGHT AWAY!

THE REV. MR. ROGER D. KNIGHT, CANDIDATE
FOR CONFERENCE MINISTER POST

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Conference, meeting in Atlanta, Ga., on March 10-12, voted unanimously to recommend the Rev. Mr. Roger D. Knight, to the delegates to the 22nd Annual Meeting of Conference, as their choice of candidates for the position of Conference Minister of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. A formal election will take place during the Annual Meeting.

The Rev. Mr. Knight is very familiar with the Southeast Conference and its churches. He has recently provided leadership to the Mission Strategy Task Group, and has consulted with the leaders of the Conference in a number of other capacities. His present position is that of Associate Executive Director of the U.C.C. Office For Church Life And Leadership. He directs the West Central Regional Office in Minneapolis, Minnesota, a position he has maintained since June, 1976.

Prior to 1976, Roger was Associate Conference Minister for

Leadership Development with the Nebraska Conference (1971-1976), Pastor of Orchard Ridge U.C.C. in Madison, Wisconsin (1960-1971), and Pastor of Gilbert Congregational Church in Iowa from 1959-1961. He was ordained by the Eau Claire Association of the Wisconsin Conference on June 14, 1959, and holds ordained ministerial standing in the Eastern Association of the Minnesota Conference.

Roger holds the B.A. degree from Wisconsin State University in Eau Clair, Wisconsin; the B.D. degree from Hartford Theological Seminary in Connecticut, and the M.S. Ed. degree from the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is married to Beth Ellen Harrington, and they are parents of four children: Steven, Geoffrey, Eric, and Leanne.

The Rev. Mr. Knight has been highly recommended for this important post. He is well known throughout the denomination as a person with great sensitivity to people, a deep commitment to our Lord, a passion for ministry, an understanding of the small church, and skills in planning and accomplishment. Every church is urged to be represented at the Annual Meeting to cast a vote for our FUTURE!

OTHER ACTIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Highlights of other business decisions of the Board of Directors include the following:

1. Approved a revised budget for the Conference operations for 1988, and directed that a proposed budget for 1989 be prepared to be submitted to the delegates to the 22nd Annual Meeting for a vote of the delegates.
2. Welcomed the news that the Conferences of the U.C.C. Insurance program for churches is now available to the congregations of the Southeast Conference. It has been known throughout the denomination that churches insuring their property under this program save money on premiums. Introduction of the program to congregations will begin soon.
3. Voted to have a second telephone installed in the Conference Office and to check on upgrading the telephone system.
4. Voted to accept the application for a grant from the Atlanta United Church of Christ, in the amount of \$3,000.
5. Voted to send a letter of thanks and appreciation to the Board of Directors of the Penn Central Conference for the gift of an IBM computer which will be used for Conference bookkeeping.
6. Requested that the Conference Constitution be rewritten to reflect an improved structure, with broader participation of Associations and congregations, and that the new draft be submitted to the churches for study in time for a proper vote during the Annual Meeting.
7. Received the report from Staff that all delegates to the 22nd Annual Meeting of Conference will receive an

Advance Mailing of all materials to be considered in the business of this meeting. Such materials are scheduled for mailing on April 25, in order to meet the Constitutional requirement for constitutional changes. Persons with reports for delegates to consider should have these in the Conference office by April 10.

8. Approved the request of Elon Homes for Children, Elon College, N. C., to conduct a Capital Funds Campaign among the churches of the Conference in 1989.

OUR CHURCH'S WIDER MISSION

No church serves the Lord fully when it uses all it's resources on itself. The Christian Gospel calls us to reach out and help others; to go a second mile to relieve suffering; to join hands with other churches to make an impact on the world for Jesus' sake. In the United Church of Christ we do this best through the giving to Our Church's Wider Mission. Such gifts keep missionaries throughout the world laboring at their post; they keep schools, hospitals, children's homes, nursing homes, performing their devoted tasks of mercy; they develop educational materials to help people to understand the Gospel; they build new churches in new communities and assist older churches in their mission; they reach out to the homeless, the disfranchised, the hopeless, and give them hope; they tell the story of EASTER to people anxious to know it's truth.

There is a lot of improvement needed in the record of benevolent giving among our churches. During 1987, the Southeast Conference budget was \$217,688.37. Receipts for that year amounted to \$208,636.70, a shortfall of \$9,051.67. We did manage to share \$8,300 with the National U.C.C. and the world mission program. That is an increase over 1986, but we need to do much better. Please send people from your church to the Annual Meeting so they can discuss and vote on the 1989 Mission Budget of the Conference, and come back and tell you what it's all about. We don't build million dollar homes for our preachers...we build faith and hope in Heaven!

GEORGIA/SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION - WORKSHOP ON STEWARDSHIP

The churches in the Georgia/South Carolina Association (and any others as well) are urged to attend a special workshop on Stewardship to be conducted on April 16, at Central Congregational, U.C.C. Church, Atlanta. This program will be under the leadership of Dr. Milton E. Gockley, Jr., of the Stewardship Council, N. Y., members of the Conference and Association Outreach Commission, and the Conference Staff. The sessions begin at 10:00 A.M. and continue until 4:00 P.M. Registration of \$4.75 includes lunch. We need this!

U.C.C. HEALTH INSURANCE COST UP-DATE

The Pension Boards of the U.C.C. which handles the Health Insurance program in which most of the U.C.C. parsonage families are covered, is working diligently to contain the rising cost in this program, and even to lower the premium rates, if at all possible. This plan experienced a forty percent (40%) increase in premium at the beginning of 1988. The U.C.C. plan is not alone in such an

increase. The health insurance industry in the nation as a whole, reported losses of \$1.25 BILLION in 1987. Almost every carrier and ever group plan seems to have been affected by rising health delivery costs. Options for the U.C.C. under consideration include: a) having the insured pay 10% of in-hospital costs rather than have the insurance company pick up 100%, plus increase the "out-of-pocket" expense level from the present \$1,500 per individual to \$2,000 (\$3,000 per family to \$5,000); b) an optional plan which would have the church or individual pay the first \$2,000 per individual (\$4,000 per family) costs, with the plan paying 100% thereafter; c) contract with Health Maintenance Organizations, realizing that this option would not be available to all participants.

No decisions have been made. The study continues. Questions and comments should be directed to the Pension Boards, U.C.C., 132 W. 31st St., New York, N. Y., 10001.

NEW CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM TO BE INTRODUCED IN CONFERENCE

"BIBLE DISCOVERY" is the new Church School curriculum for several major denominations. It promises to be one of the very best programs of Christian education we have ever had. The first workshop to introduce the material to people in the Southeast Conference will take place on MAY 7, when the people of the CHURCH AND MINISTRY AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMISSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE will meet in Atlanta for some concentrated study of the material. Watch for other dates for broader introduction among the churches.

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL TRAINING

The Conference Task Group on Spiritual Renewal will participate in a special training event on July 8-9. Those serving on this important group should mark calendars now and attend. A location in Atlanta is being arranged. The first gathering of representatives from congregations interested in Spiritual Renewal is being scheduled for NOVEMBER 18-19. Hold the dates!

SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE WOMEN'S RETREAT

Dorothea Bowling announces a very special retreat for the women of the Southeast Conference which is scheduled to be conducted on OCTOBER 7. This event will take place at the Simpson Wood Retreat Center, 4511 Jones Bridge Circle, Norcross, Ga., 30092. More news will be given later regarding registration.

CHURCH BUILDER'S CLUB - CHURCH BUILDER'S CLUB

Sometime ago a program known as the Church Builder's Club was started in the Southeast Conference, and the membership in all the churches was requested to participate. It's purpose is to receive gifts from individuals and congregations which can be made available to start new churches in the bounds of Southeast Conference. The metropolitan centers in Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama, are growing at a phenomenal rate and offer excellent opportunities for the United Church of Christ to start new congregations and build new churches. We can become the center of new church growth in this denomination, if we get ourselves together to do it. So far only a few congregations have responded to the call

to make gifts to this program. We appeal to ever church to help another get started. It would be difficult to identify a congregation in this Conference which got it's start all by itself. Practically every one has had assistance from some group or from the denomination in the past. We have a request now from three separate groups in Tennessee wanting to organize as U.C.C. churches in their respective communities. We have inquiries from other communities in Georgia and South Carolina. We need your help! Join the Builders Club!

CONFERENCE EDITOR STILL NEEDED

It is hard to believe, but no one came forward to volunteer for the position of EDITOR of the SOUTHEAST NEWS. We re-issue the call for a talented person to take over this important function. We are also up-grading the position to EDITOR OF THE WORLD FAMOUS SOUTHEAST NEWS. Doesn't that sound better than the "Nationally Famous" description used in the last issue of this New News Letter? The pay is the same, however; NOTHING. If we had any money we would pay a fortune for anyone undertaking this great task, but since we don't have any money, the position will go to the first person who presents the proper credentials and signs a waiver of benefits, except a hug and a "thank you" after each issue is published. Telephone, 633-5655; write, P.O. Box 29883, Atlanta, Ga., 30359; drive, ride your bike or jog over to the office at 2676 Clairmont Road, N. E., Atlanta, and sign up. Come early to avoid the rush!

SOMETHING ELSE

We have a lot of other news, but we had better save some of it for another New News Letter or the WORLD FAMOUS SOUTHEAST NEWS (whichever gets published next). Keep praying for the homeless, the hungry, the Palestinians, the Israelis, the Afghans, the South Africans, the Nicaraguans, the President, the Congress, the Southeast Conference, and all the little people of the world... and especially, keep praying that EASTER will come again and EVERYBODY will know the tomb is empty...and will know the One who left it so!

DATES TO REMEMBER

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
MARCH 19	ALA/TENN ASSOC. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	CHATTANOOGA, TENN
MARCH 26	SOUTHERN REGIONAL U.C.B.H.M. DIRECTORS	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MARCH 29	CONFERENCE STAFF MEETING	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
APRIL 8	SO. ALA/N.W. FLA. CLERGY CLUSTER	BAKER, FLA.
APRIL 9	GA/S.C. ASSOC. BOARD & ORGANIZATIONS ORIENTATION	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
APRIL 16	GA/S.C. ASSOC. STEWARDSHIP WORKSHOP	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
APRIL 22-24	SPRING MINI-CAMP	LaGUNA BEACH, FLA
MAY 7	NEW CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CURRICULUM INTRODUCTION; CH. & MINISTRY AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMISSIONS	
MAY 16-19	MINISTER AND SPOUSE RETREAT	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JUNE 10-12	SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING	BLOWING ROCK, N.C. SEWANEE, TENNESSEE
JULY 8-9	SPIRITUAL RENEWAL TASK GROUP TRAINING	ATLANTA, GEORGIA
AUGUST 12-13	CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS RETREAT	TO BE ANNOUNCED
SEPT. 16-17	ALA/TENN ASSOC. ANNUAL MEETING	SWEETWATER, TENN
SEPT. 17	ATLANTA AREA STEWARDSHIP EVENT	ATLANTA, GEORGIA

To: ALL PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FROM: HORACE S. SILLS, INTERIM CONFERENCE MINISTER

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL CALL FOR THE 22ND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE - JUNE 10-12, 1988

This is your official notification of the Twenty-second (22nd) Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. We will gather on the beautiful campus of the University of the South at Sewanee, Tennessee, "Situated on a brow of the Cumberland Plateau between Nashville and Chattanooga." The scenery is spectacular, the accommodations exceptional, the fellowship will be wonderful, and our worship will be spiritually uplifting. You will not want to miss this one! The first session will begin on Friday evening at 7:30 P.M. We will conclude with worship and Holy Communion on Sunday Morning.

The theme for the meeting will be, "ON HOLY GROUND." Where better to experience the holiness we seek than among fellow Christians in a mountain top location? We will conduct some necessary business such as electing a new Conference Minister, voting on Constitutional changes, electing new officers, and approving a Conference budget. We will learn some things, sing some hymns, make a lot of friends, pray a lot, and celebrate the oneness we have in Christ, and take a look at where we need to strengthen our ministries in the future.

In addition to all Ordained, Commissioned, and Licensed ministers having standing in an Association of the Conference, each church is entitled to be represented by three (3) lay delegates. Churches with membership over one hundred (100) are entitled to send an additional voting delegate for each additional one hundred (100) members or major fraction thereof. Every congregation in the Conference needs to be represented and we need to have the names of those from your church who will officially represent you. Enclosed is a registration form for your use. Please complete the form with names and addresses of your delegates and return to the Southeast Conference office by APRIL 10. All official delegates will receive an advance packet of materials, mailed directly to them, providing valuable information about the meeting. That packet is scheduled to be mailed on APRIL 25. We can't mail without a name!

Every effort is being made to hold the cost of this meeting to the level of 1987. Exact cost figures will be made available to you in the next mailing. Churches should pay the cost of attendance for their pastors and delegates. Visitors are always welcome and urged to attend. We hope to see a lot of people in Sewanee.